

CHAPTER 3



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This chapter provides an overview of the key resources and uses occurring in the Rio Grande Corridor, and policies to be followed or actions to be implemented to improve management of the area. Many guidelines or decisions already in place have effectively met public needs and resolved issues. Because they have been proven effective, the BLM will continue to use these measures to manage the Rio Grande Corridor. Decisions from previous plans that will continue are referred to in the following resource/use summaries.

In August of 1996, BLM amended its grazing regulations to require each state to provide a set of standards and guidelines that address the health of public lands. At a minimum, the standards must meet the fundamentals of land health outlined in the regulations and must apply to all management and uses of the land. BLM in Colorado and New Mexico has standards in place that comply with the new regulations. It is anticipated that New Mexico may have additional standards in the near future. As BLM implements any management action on public lands, the standards must be addressed. Also, all management actions or tools, referred to as guidelines in the regulations, must be evaluated to ensure they move management toward a desired future condition or landscape that achieves the standards for land health.

Standards for public land health are meant to provide measures by which the health of the land can be assessed for condition and trend. They are not intended to provide a process that categorizes the land by condition classes. Indicators associated with the standards provide guidance to assess resource condition for a given landscape, whether the boundaries are an allotment or a larger unit of land such as a watershed. Assessments of public lands are conducted in priority or focus areas and in areas where administrative requirements indicate the need,

such as term permit renewals (grazing programs) or special recreation permits (recreation programs).

The following are standards by which land health will be assessed:

- C Upland soils must exhibit infiltration and permeability rates that are appropriate to soil type, climate, landform, and geologic processes. Adequate soil infiltration and permeability allow for the accumulation of soil moisture necessary for optimal plant growth and vigor and minimizes surface runoff.
- C Riparian systems associated with both running and standing water function properly and have the ability to recover from major disturbance such as fire, severe grazing, or 100-year floods. Riparian vegetation captures sediment and provides forage, habitat, and biodiversity. Water quality is improved or maintained. Stable soils store and release water slowly.
- C Healthy, productive plant and animal communities of native and other desirable species are maintained at viable population levels commensurate with the species and habitat's potential. Plants and animals at both the community and population level are productive, resilient, diverse, vigorous, and able to reproduce and sustain natural fluctuations and the ecological process.
- C Special status, threatened, and endangered species (federal and state), and other plants and animals officially designated by the BLM and their habitats are maintained or enhanced by sustaining healthy, native plant and animal communities.
- C Water quality standards are being met for all water bodies.



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ACCESS

BLM policy is to provide reasonable access to meet the needs of all visitors and users, including those with disabilities, to public facilities and resources. At the same time, the agency attempts to minimize conflicts among users, promote visitor safety, and prevent damage to natural resources. The BLM may acquire legal access across nonfederal land through donation, land exchange, purchase, or easement from willing landowners.

Management guidance for motorized access to and across public land is contained in Executive Order 11644 (February 8, 1972); Executive Order 11989; BLM Manuals 8342, 8300, H-9114-1; and Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 8340 and 8364. Executive Order 11644 (as amended) establishes policies and procedures to ensure that the use of off-highway vehicles (OHVs) on public land is controlled and directed. All roads will be constructed and maintained in accordance with BLM guidelines, including those identified in Instruction Memorandum No. NM-95-031 (USDI, BLM 1995).

The San Luis and Taos RMPs established that motorized vehicle use in the planning area is limited to designated roads and trails. Route designation decisions contained in BLM New Mexico's *North Unit Transportation Plan* (USDI, BLM 1994) will continue. Route designation recommendations for the remainder of the planning area are included.

The BLM will continue to carry out decisions recorded in the San Luis and Taos RMPs that limited vehicle use in most of the planning area to designated roads. Vehicle use will be allowed on 127.1 miles of roads and trails to be designated as open in the planning area. To protect resources, the BLM will designate 76.3 miles of public land roads as closed to motorized vehicles (see Table 3-1 and Map 6).

Upper Gorge (Colorado)

Vehicle use will be limited to 57.2 miles of roads or trails designated as open. Closed routes will total

34.0 miles. The vehicle closure on 2,000 acres in the Flat Top portion of the San Luis Hills ACEC will remain in effect. All routes will be designated within riparian areas between the La Sauses Cemetery and the Lobatos Bridge (on the west side) as closed to vehicle use. In addition, BLM will rehabilitate closed routes to enhance riparian vegetation (on 0.5 acre).

Upper Gorge (New Mexico)

No change will be made in the designation of 31.6 miles of open routes.

Lower Gorge

Vehicle use will be limited to 23.5 miles of routes designated as open. A total of 10.1 miles of routes will be closed. Several sites adjacent to the Rio Grande will be closed to vehicles including the river access road at the Arroyo Hondo Campground, public lands at the confluence of the Rio Grande and Rio Embudo, a vehicle pullout located 0.5 mile south of Embudo Station on the east shore, and the pullout located just upstream from the Velarde Diversion Dam (also on the east shore). The public land at Lover's Lane will be closed to vehicles, as well as most of the adjacent private lands if they are acquired. (Parking will only be available on a 0.5-acre area between NM 68 and the cottonwoods). If the 2,510 acres of private land adjacent to the Taos Junction Bridge is acquired, the 1.5 miles of riparian habitat will be improved by closing selected areas (totaling 1.4 acres) to vehicle use. A 0.2-acre area east of the Taos Junction Bridge, if acquired, will remain open to vehicle access and a variety of shoreline uses.

Copper Hill

Vehicle use will be limited to 14.8 miles of inventoried routes designated as open; closed routes will total 32.2 miles. The closed routes are predominantly duplicate roads and those with no destination.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-1 Rio Grande Corridor Route Designations		
Route #	Designation	Rationale
New Mexico Designations (shown on Maps 6-b through 6-e in back pocket)		
100	Open	Grazing permittee/recreational access to rim of Petaca, and access to state land.
100A	Closed	No destination.
100B	Open	Private land access.
100C	Open	Grazing permittee access.
101	Closed	Watershed/migratory big game protection.
102+A,B,C	Closed	Watershed/migratory big game protection. Designation effective only if lands acquired
103+A,B,C	Closed	Watershed/migratory big game protection. Designation effective only if lands acquired
104+A,B	Closed	Watershed/migratory big game protection. Designation effective only if lands acquired
105A	Open	Pipeline/private land access.
106	Open	Private land access. Closed beyond private land for watershed protection.
106A	Closed	Watershed/migratory big game protection.
107	Open	Gas line access.
107A	Closed	No destination.
107B	Closed	Watershed protection, duplicate route.
108A	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.
109	Closed	Watershed protection, no legal public access.
110+A	Closed	Watershed protection.
111	Closed	Watershed protection.
112+A,B	Closed	Watershed protection, Mica Mine trail.
113	Open	Gravel pit access.
114	Open	Forest/private land access.
114A	Closed	No public access.
114B	Open	Private land access.
114C	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.
114D	Open	This route will remain open to provide for access to private land and management of the natural gas pipeline.
115	Open	Forest/state land access.
115B	Open	Forest/state land/range improvement access.
115F	Open	Grazing permittee/range improvement access.
116A	Open	Private land access.
117	Open	Powerline access.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-1 Rio Grande Corridor Route Designations		
Route #	Designation	Rationale
118	Open	Private land access.
119	Open	Private land access.
119B	Closed	Watershed protection, duplicate route.
119C	Open	Grazing permittee/private land access.
120	Open/Closed	Lover's Lane - private land access from highway. If access acquired, river access will be provided, w/no vehicles allowed in riparian zone.
121	Open	Private land access.
122	Open	Private land access.
123	Closed	Watershed protection (Rinconada Overlook area).
124	Open	County Line Recreation Site (access to recreation facilities).
125	Open	Mineral material site access.
125A	Closed	Watershed protection, duplicate route.
125B,C,D	Closed	Crucial winter range/watershed protection.
125E	Closed	Watershed/wildlife protection.
125F	Closed	Cultural, archaeological resources protection.
125G	Closed	Watershed protection.
125H	Closed	Cultural, archaeological resources protection.
125I	Closed	Pipeline route, watershed protection.
126	Open	Private land access.
126A	Closed	Watershed protection, duplicate route.
126B,C	Closed	Protection of crucial winter range.
126D,E	Closed	Watershed protection.
126F	Open	If the private property to the south is acquired, this route will remain open due to its scenic potential. A seasonal closure will also be implemented from December through April for winter range wildlife protection.
126G	Open	If lands are acquired this route will remain open for challenging 4-wheel drive (4WD) opportunities without impacting other resource values.
126H,I	Closed	If lands are acquired, these routes will be closed because they occur in an area of high soil erosion potential.
126J	Closed	Duplicate of 126.
126K	Closed	Prone to erosion.
126L	Closed	Wildlife Values. The portions of 126L on private land if acquired will also be closed.
126D,M,N	Closed	If lands are acquired these routes will be closed to protect crucial fawning and calving for big game species of wildlife.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-1 Rio Grande Corridor Route Designations		
Route #	Designation	Rationale
126O	Open	To afford access to the historic Champion Mine.
126P,Q	Closed	Hazard of water erosion is high.
127	Open	Private land access.
127A,B,C	Closed	Watershed/crucial winter range protection. Highly erodible soils.
127D,E,F	Closed	Watershed protection.
128	Open	Access to private land.
128A	Closed	Watershed/crucial winter range protection.
128B	Closed	If lands are acquired this route will be closed because it duplicates the access provided by Route 126.
128C	Closed	If lands are acquired this route will be closed because it dead ends and does not provide for scenic views or 4WD opportunities.
128D	Open	If lands are acquired this route will remain open to provide access to historic mine workings for interpretive purposes.
129	Closed	Watershed/crucial winter range protection.
130	Open	Mineral material site access.
130A	Open	Mining claim access.
130B	Closed	This route will be closed north of the intersection with 130F; the primary entrance to this route is 130F.
130C,D,E	Closed	These routes consist of short spurs that do not provide access to specific locations or scenic vistas nor do they provide for any measurable 4WD opportunities.
130F	Open	This route will be open to provide access along 130B.
130G	Closed	Watershed protection, duplicate routes.
130H	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.
130I	Closed	Previously closed by New Mexico State Highway & Transportation Department for mineral material site security. Watershed protection, no destination.
132	Open	Mining claim access (primary access to Harding Mine).
132A,B,C,D, E,F	Open	Mining claim and recreational access.
132G	Closed	Watershed/riparian protection.
132H	Open	If Section 32 is acquired, this route will be open, subject to mitigation of erosion.
132I	Open	If Section 32 is acquired, this route will remain open to a scenic overlook.
132J	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.
132K	Open	Mining claim and recreational access.
133	Closed	Watershed protection, duplicate route.
134	Closed	Watershed protection, duplicate route.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-1 Rio Grande Corridor Route Designations		
Route #	Designation	Rationale
135	Closed	Mining claim/recreation access. Closed from junction with 135C to the east.
135A	Open	This route will remain open to form a loop with 136.
135B,C	Closed	Watershed/crucial winter range protection.
136	Open	Closed at parking area near wild and scenic boundary for watershed/crucial winter range protection.
137	Open	Mining claim/recreation access.
137A,B,C	Closed	Watershed protection, duplicate routes.
137D	Closed	Watershed protection.
138	Closed	4WD use is considered incompatible with on-site soil conditions and resource protection objectives for riparian habitats.
138A	Closed	Watershed protection, duplicate route, no destination.
139+A,B	Closed	Watershed/crucial winter range protection.
140+A,B,C	Closed	Watershed/crucial winter range protection.
141	Closed	Watershed protection.
142+A	Closed	Watershed protection.
143+A,B,C,D	Closed	Watershed protection.
144	Open	Recreation trail access.
145+A,B,C,D	Closed	Watershed protection.
146	Open	Recreational access to river, closed near state land boundary
147	Closed	Watershed protection.
148	Closed	Watershed protection.
149	Open	Private land access.
150	Open	Forest access (Carson National Forest).
FR606 (105)	Open	Forest access (Carson National Forest)
Colorado Designations (shown on Maps 6-a and 6-b in back pocket)		
4998	Closed	Watershed protection; grazing permittee access.
4999	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination; grazing permittee access.
5000+A	Open	Grazing permittee access.
5001	Closed	Private property access; provide closed to protect wetland and water bird populations.
5001A	Closed	Watershed protection, duplicate route.
5002	Open	Grazing permittee access.
5002A	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-1 Rio Grande Corridor Route Designations		
Route #	Designation	Rationale
5003	Open	River access.
5003+A,B	Open	Private land access.
5003C	Closed	Watershed protection.
5003D	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.
5003E	Open	Canyon rim access.
5004	Open	River access.
5004A,B,C,D,E	Closed	Watershed protection.
5005	Open	Recreation/grazing permittee access.
5005A	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.
5005B,C	Closed	Wilderness Study Area.
5006	Open	Recreation access.
5006A	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.
5006B	Closed	Wilderness Study Area, watershed protection.
5007	Open	Recreation/grazing permittee access.
5007A	Closed	Watershed protection, Wilderness Study Area.
5009+A,B	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.
5009C	Closed	Private land access; grazing permittee access provided. Closed to maintain ACEC values.
5010	Open	River/grazing permittee access.
5010A	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.
5010B,C	Closed	Watershed protection, duplicate route.
5014A	Closed	Wilderness Study Area, watershed protection.
5014B	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.
5015	Open	Grazing permittee access.
5015A,B	Closed	Watershed protection, no destination.
5015C	Open	Water well access.
5016	Closed	Watershed protection, Wilderness Study Area.
5017A	Open	Grazing permittee access.
5020	Open	River access.
5020A,B	Closed	Watershed protection, wildlife habitat.
5021A	Closed	Watershed protection, wildlife habitat. Private land access provided.

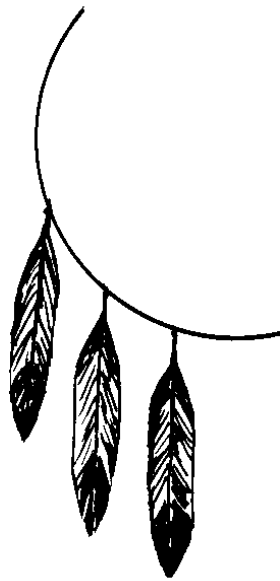
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

AMERICAN INDIAN COORDINATION

The BLM's objective is to be responsive to American Indian uses within the planning area. It is BLM policy to accommodate access to and ceremonial use of sacred sites by American Indian religious practitioners and avoid adversely affecting the physical integrity of such sites. The agency will coordinate and consult with local tribes about sacred uses within the

planning area, while protecting the privacy required for these uses.

Although most interactions will be with the Taos and Picuris Pueblos, other tribal groups have expressed cultural affinities with the Rio Grande Corridor.



LAND OWNERSHIP AND REALTY ACTIONS

All public lands in the planning area are classified for retention, while most State and private lands are proposed for acquisition. The BLM will acquire lands within the planning area by purchase, exchange, easement, or donation if landowners are willing (See Table 3-2). In limited instances, such as under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act, the agency may dispose of lands in the planning area if it is in the best interest of the public, but this will require an amendment to the RMP.

In the planning area there will be no disposal of public land except for color-of-title sales and disposal of the three parcels identified below:

- C 200 acres in T 27 N, R 12 E, Section 20 for potential use as a landfill by Taos County;
- C Allow disposal of approximately 0.5 acre in T 23 N, R 10 E, Section 19 to address community needs; and
- C Approximately 5 acres in T 24 N, R 11 E, Section 33 in Pilar for community purposes and a trash transfer site.

BLM will continue to grant rights-of-way across public lands to provide access and utility services to private or State lands when no alternative is available. These new rights-of-way will be considered on a case-by-case basis except in exclusion areas. To protect scenic quality and habitat for the Mexican spotted owl and fisheries, rights-of-way will be excluded from the

Rio Grande and Red Wild and Scenic Rivers, the expanded Wild Rivers Recreation Area, the entire Lower Gorge Unit (with exceptions as described below), and Copper Hill ACEC's Agua Caliente and Rio Embudo Protection Zones. (Note: Rights-of-way will be excluded from the Wild Rivers Recreation Area and the Lower Gorge Unit unless they are necessary to administer or improve access to recreation sites.)

Within the Lower Gorge ACEC, access or utility services to private or State land where such access is otherwise not possible will be considered. Rights-of-way to private or State land completely surrounded by public land may be authorized, with restrictions to protect the scenic quality of the area. Only one access point to such parcels will be authorized across public lands. An amendment to an existing right-of-way (e.g., a request for expansion, a different use, or to provide structures different in style) will only be approved if the change is consistent with the objectives of the Final Plan. New utility projects will be underground only and will be co-located with roads. The right-of-way window near the Rio Grande Gorge Bridge will continue in effect. Rights-of-way for acequias (irrigation ditches) are grandfathered through the legislation for Wild and Scenic Rivers, so they also will remain in effect. Construction and rehabilitation of acequias will have to be done using historical materials and methods to protect wild and scenic river values.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-2 State and Private Lands/Minerals Proposed for Acquisition						
Area	Township	Range	Section	Subsection	Acres	Surface or Subsurface
State Lands in Colorado Proposed for Acquisition						
San Luis Hills ACEC	35N	10E	36	All	640	Both
	34N	10E	36	All	640	Both
	34N	11E	16	All	640	Both
Upper Gorge	33N	11E	16	All	640	Both
Subtotal					2,560	
Private Lands in Colorado Proposed for Acquisition						
Upper Gorge	33N	11E	14	Lots, 3, 4	64	Both
	33N	11E	15	SE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$	240	Both
	33N	11E	22	Lots 1, 2, 3, 4	345	Both
	33N	11E	27	Lots 1, 2, 3	59	Both
	33N	11E	28	Lots 1, 2	59	Both
	34N	10E	3	S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$	80	Both
	34N	10E	11	SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$	40	Both
	35N	10E	35	NE $\frac{1}{4}$	160	Both
	35N	10E	24	S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$	80	Both
	35N	10E	25	NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$	200	Both
	35N	11E	17	SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$	40	Both
	35N	11E	18	S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$	80	Both
	35N	11E	19	NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$	120	Both
	35N	11E	30	NW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$	240	Both
Subtotal					1,807	
Total State & Nonfederal Lands in Colorado Proposed for Acquisition					4,367	

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Area	Township	Range	Section	Subsection	Acres	Surface or Subsurface
State Lands in New Mexico Proposed for Acquisition					Table 3-2 (continued)	
Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River	31N	11E	2	W½SE¼	80	Both
	30N	12E	7	E½SE¼	80	Both
	30N	12E	29	SW¼NW¼, W½W½SE¼	80	Both
	30N	12E	32	SW¼, S½NW¼, W½W½SE¼, W½W½NE¼	320	Both
Wild Rivers Recreation Area	29N	12E	16	All	560	Both
	29N	12E	10	NW¼SW¼, Lot 5	80	Both
	29N	12E	32	All	617	Both
Orilla Verde	24N	11E	2	NW¼, W½SW¼, NE¼SW¼	267	Both
	24N	11E	32	W½NW¼	80	Both
Lower Gorge ACEC	23N	10E	16	N½	320	Both
Copper Hill ACEC	23N	11E	32	All	640	Both
	23N	11E	2	N½	329	Both
	23N	11E	16	All	640	Both
	23N	10E	36	All state lands	300	Both
	24N	11E	36	All	469	Both
Subtotal					4,862	
Private Lands in New Mexico Proposed for Acquisition						
Upper Gorge	25N	11E	23	N½NE¼, NW¼SE¼, SW¼NE¼	160	Both
	25N	11E	26	SE¼	160	Both
Along Rio Hondo	27N	12E	30,31 protracted	Portion within Arroyo Hondo Grant from north rim to south rim & 100' setbacks	90	Both
Wild Rivers Recreation Area	28N	12E	7	W½	308	Surface
Orilla Verde Recreation Area	24N	11E	22, 23, 29	Portions of each section	253	Both
	24N	11E	1, 2, 10, 11, 12, 13,14,15 protracted	Portions of each section	2,454	Both

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Area	Township	Range	Section	Subsection	Acres	Surface Subsurface
Private Lands in New Mexico Proposed for Acquisition (continued)					Table 3-2 (continued)	
Lower Gorge ACEC	24N	11E	32	Various small holding claims as shown in RMP	65	Both
	23N	9E	23	Tract (Tr.) A, SE¼, NE¼SW¼	215	Both
	23N	9E	24	E½, SE¼NW¼, S½SW¼, Tr. A	443	Both
	23N	9E	34	SW¼SE¼, SE¼SW¼	80	Both
	23N	10E	1	Lots 5, 6, SW¼SE¼	77	Both
	23N	10E	11	Lots 1, 2, 10, S½NE¼	169	Both
	23N	10E	12	Lots 1, 2	75	Both
	23N	10E	15	Small Holding Claim (SHC) 4472 Tract 1; SHC 2143; SHC 1109; SHC 4098; SHC 489; SHC 488 Tract 1; SHC 488; SHC 2143	104	Both
	23N	10E	16	Lots 1, 2	67	Both
	23N	10E	19	Lots 3, 4, 13, 30, 31, 32, 34, 38; SHC 3266; SHC 388; SHC 969; SHC 561 Tr. 1, 2, 3; SHC 559 Tr.1, 3; SHC 556 Tr. 2; SHC 560 Tr. 1, 2, 3, 4; SHC 797 Tr. 2; SHC 792; SHC 966; SHC 380 Tr. 3; SHC 386; SHC 389; SHC 382 Tr. 1, 2, 3; SHC 383; SHC 494 Tr.1; SHC 968 Tr. 1	216	Both
	23N	10E	20	Lots 1, 3, 4, 6, 7; SHC 1111 Tr. 3; SHC 1120; SHC 4472; SHC 1536; SHC 801 Tr. 1, 2, 3; SHC 1000; SHC 798 Boltou Tr., Romero Tr.; SHC 1121 Borrego Tr., Archuleta Tr., Roybal Tr.; SHC 561 Tr. 4; SHC 560 Tr. 4; SHC 968 Tr. 2; SHC 556 Tr. 3; SHC 559 Tr. 2	269	Both
	23N	10E	21	SHC 1536; SHC 1111 Tr. 3, SHC 1120 (1128028); SHC 966 Tr. 1; SHC 349 (446); SHC 355 (457); SHC 402 (444); SHC 403 (443); SHC 488 (447); SHC 487 Tr. 1; SHC 4; SHC 690 Romero Tr. (776673), Romero Tr. (45); SHC 487 Romero Tr. (448), Ortega Tr.; SHC 966 Tr. 2; SHC 2143; Lot 1	170	Both
	23N	10E	22	SHC 4098 (489); Sanchez Tr., Romero Tr.; SHC 488 Tr. 2; SHC 488 (181954); SHC 2143	33	Both
	23N	11E	6	Tract 4	90	Both
	23N	11E	8	N½	320	Surface
	23N	11E	5	S½	320	Surface

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Area	Township	Range	Section	Subsection	Acres	Surface or Subsurface
Nonfederal Lands in New Mexico Proposed for Acquisition (continued)					Table 3-2 (continued)	
Copper Hill ACEC	23N	11E	17	Part	588	Surface
	23N	11E	17, 18, 19, 20	Patent #33276	103	Both
	23N	11E	21	NW¼, SW¼, SE¼, N½NE¼	560	Surface
	23N	11E	29	Patent #s 1018121 & 30820005	51	Both
Subtotal					7,440	
Total State and Private Lands in New Mexico Proposed for Acquisition					12,302	
Nonfederal Minerals/BLM Surface in New Mexico Proposed for Acquisition						
Wild Rivers Recreation Area	29N	12E	10	NE¼SW¼, NW¼SE¼	80	Subsurface
	29N	12E	20	E½E½, E½SW¼SE¼, E½NW¼NE¼	189	Subsurface
	29N	12E	21	N½	320	Subsurface
Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River	26N	11E	12, 13	Grant Lands Case #27827	138	Subsurface
	26N	11E	1	SE¼, part	73	Subsurface
	25N	11E	11	SE¼	160	Subsurface
	25N	11E	23	NW¼	160	Subsurface
	25N	11E	26	W½	320	Subsurface
	25N	11E	27	SE¼	160	Subsurface
Orilla Verde Recreation Area	24N	11E	16	NW¼, N½SW¼, SW¼SW¼, N½NE¼, SW¼NE¼	400	Subsurface
Total Nonfederal Minerals in New Mexico Proposed for Acquisition					2,000	

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

Of the planning area's 123,750 public land acres, 73,105 are in 25 allotments that will remain under permit for seasonal grazing by sheep and cattle. The BLM has standards in both states for rangeland health with grazing guidelines to help the agency and allottees meet those standards. These standards and guidelines direct livestock management on public lands (see page 3-1).

Allotment boundaries on two allotments will be changed; #636 in New Mexico, will be adjusted to exclude springs in the Cañada Comanche, and #4245 in Colorado will be split into two allotments. In New Mexico allotments #603 and #641 are only partially in the planning area. For this reason, information for these allotments was not included in the tables for the plan. However, the vegetative treatments proposed for these allotments were included and analyzed in the plan.

BLM monitors the range resource for condition, trend, utilization, actual use, climate and rangeland health (see Glossary for definitions). Table 3-3 describes the schedule for performing minimum levels of allotment monitoring within the corridor. In New Mexico, vegetative inventories and monitoring studies will be conducted in accordance with the *Taos Monitoring Plan* (USDI, BLM 1988) as required to establish the existing condition, estimate resource potential, evaluate changes in resource condition over time, and evaluate the effectiveness of management actions.

Table 3-3 Schedule for Allotment Monitoring	
Element	Minimum Frequency
Condition	10 years
Trend	3 to 5 years
Utilization	1 to 2 years/as needed
Actual Use	annually
Climate	annually

Upper Gorge - Colorado

The 13 grazing allotments in Colorado provide 2,418 AUMs of forage for sheep and cattle under the Final Plan. The area allocated to livestock forage will not change. Grazing will continue in the riparian areas of the La Sauses (#4255), Piñon Hills (#4249), Mesa

Common (#4251), Piñon (#4245A and B), and Flat Top (#4253) allotments at small water gaps (about 2.5 acres total). The remainder of the riparian area in these allotments will be rested until the standards for a properly functioning riparian area are met on 124.5 acres. Once the standards are met, grazing will be allowed as long as a 4-inch stubble height on herbaceous species is maintained through the May to June high-water season or no more than 20% of the annual growth of woody riparian species will be removed.

Changes have been made in grazing management practices, acreage of vegetative treatments, kinds and numbers of range improvements, and levels of inventory and monitoring. These changes are expected to result in increased forage production that will be assigned in part to wildlife and watershed protection and in part to livestock uses. These changes are as follows:

- C Grazing Systems: Six allotments will have one year of rest every third year, two allotments will have one year of rest every fourth year, one will have rest every fifth year and four allotments will be managed under rest-rotation;
- C Vegetation Treatments: A total of 1,124 acres will be seeded;
- C Seasons of Use: Seven allotments will be grazed in the dormant season, and six will be grazed in the growing season after plants have adequate root reserves for regrowth; and
- C Range Improvements: Six wells will be developed to water 11 allotments. Permanent water gaps will be constructed on five allotments.

New Mexico

The 12 allotments in New Mexico will initially provide 1,289 AUMs of forage for cattle grazing. One allotment will be retired leaving 11 allotments providing 1,255 AUMs of livestock forage. Livestock grazing will be excluded within the riparian and wetland areas of the Lower Gorge ACEC and below the rim in the upper gorge.

To protect riparian resources and minimize conflicts with wildlife and recreationists, all unallotted and unpermitted areas (32,327 acres) and 600 acres within the Pajarito Allotment (#636) will be excluded from livestock grazing over the long term. In addition, 24,446 acres have already been excluded by the Taos RMP. To improve riparian condition over the long

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

term, grazing privileges on the Cuestecita Allotment (#521C1,392 acres) will be retained only for the current permittee. Grazing will be excluded upon relinquishment of the permit and no permit transfer will be allowed. If grazing preference AUMs become available in the

Rio Grande Corridor, the grazing use of these AUMs will be at the discretion of the Authorized Officer and will be prescribed to meet vegetation management objectives. The type, class (i.e., cattle, sheep, goats, horses, or other livestock) of grazing, and season of use will be determined and then a grazing schedule applied to the area where the AUMs are permitted.

The following will apply for all units in New Mexico:

- C Grazing Systems: Will be implemented on four allotments. No system will be in place for the remaining eight until monitoring demonstrates the need;
- C Vegetation Treatments: The BLM will treat 3,066 acres of the shrub/grassland and woodland associations on seven allotments;
- C Seasons of Use: Will range from 20 to 185 days.

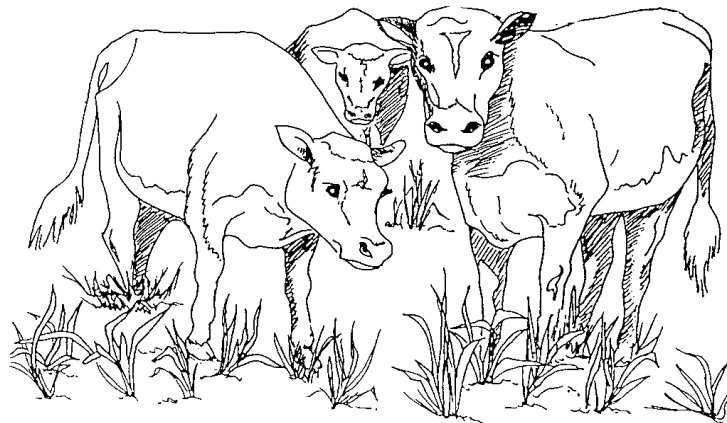
Grazing on four allotments will begin in mid-

May, five will have fall/winter use seasons, and three will begin use in mid-June; and

- C Range Improvements: Will be planned on three allotments. The improvements on two allotments will be designed to improve riparian conditions, and to improve livestock forage and reduce unauthorized use of non-federal land on the other.

Table 3-4 contains a description of the basic management guidelines for each allotment under the Final Plan.

The following terms are used to describe grazing management in Table 3-4: (1) deferment - involves delay of grazing in a pasture until the seed maturity (ripening) of the key forage species; (2) rest - is distinguished from deferment in that the range receives nonuse for a full year rather than just during the growth period; (3) rotation - involves the movement of livestock from one pasture to another on a scheduled basis. Systems with deferment and rest typically involve livestock rotations.



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-4 Grazing Allotment Management Plans**Upper Gorge - Colorado****4243 River Allotment**

Grazing System: One pasture with deferred rotation (deferred until after seed ripe).
 Animals and AUMs: Cattle; 200 allowable animal unit months (AUMs)
 Season of Use: October 1 to November 12
 Each Year Graze Oct 1 to Nov 12

Vegetation Treatment: None planned.
 Range Improvements: None planned.
 Monitoring: Inventory and monitor range condition on 627 acres (50% of uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend every three years after growing season.

4244 South Valley Allotment

Grazing System: One pasture with deferred rotation (deferred until after seed ripe) with rest every fourth year.
 Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 136 allowable AUMs
 Season of Use: December 1 to February 8
 Year 1 Graze Dec 1 to Feb 8
 Year 2 Graze Dec 1 to Feb 8
 Year 3 Graze Dec 1 to Feb 8
 Year 4 Rest

Vegetation Treatment: None planned.
 Range Improvements: None planned; livestock water at river on narrow rocky natural water gap
 Monitoring: Inventory and monitor range condition on 738 acres (25% of the uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend every fourth year when allotment is rested.

4245A North Piñon Allotment

Grazing System: Allotment will be split into two; one-pasture deferred rotation system will be developed on each with rest every third year.
 Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 168 AUMs
 Seasons of Use: May 20 to June 24 and November 6 to November 30
 Year 1 Graze May 20 to Jun 24
 Year 2 Graze Nov 6 to Nov 30
 Year 3 Rest
 This grazing plan allows for complete rest every third year for both allotments in the spring and fall.

Vegetation Treatment: Reseed 215 acres of sandy bench range site w/mix of native cool-season grasses and forbs. BLM will work with private landowner to improve riparian condition. Allocate expected forage increase of 4 AUMs to wildlife/watershed (3 AUMs) and livestock (1 AUM).
 Range Improvements: Develop well and 2 miles pipeline to water this, Piñon Hills and Kiowa Hill Allotments. Permittee will haul water to livestock w/change in location every 10 days.
 Monitoring: Inventory and monitor range condition on 500 acres (50% of uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend in Year 3 when rested and repeat every three years.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-4 Grazing Allotment Management Plans**Upper Gorge - Colorado (continued)****4245B South Piñon Allotment**

Grazing System:	One pasture deferred rotation with rest every third year.
Animals and AUMs:	Cattle - 114 AUMs
Seasons of Use	May 20 to June 24 and November 6 to November 30
Year 1	Graze Nov 6 to Nov 30
Year 2	Graze May 20 to Jun 24
Year 3	Rest
	This grazing plan allows for complete rest every third year for both allotments in the spring and fall.
Vegetation Treatment:	None planned.
Range Improvements:	Haul water to livestock w/change in location every 10 days.
Monitoring:	Inventory and monitor range condition on 500 acres (50% of uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend in Year 3 when rested and repeat every three years.

4247 Braiden Allotment

Grazing System:	Develop grazing system with full year's rest (deferred until after seed rest) every fourth year.
Animals and AUMs:	Cattle - 40 allowable AUMs
Season of Use:	November 1 to November 20
Year 1	Graze Nov 1 to Nov 20
Year 2	Graze Nov 1 to Nov 20
Year 3	Graze Nov 1 to Nov 20
Year 4	Rest
Vegetation Treatment:	None planned.
Range Improvements:	None planned.
Monitoring:	Inventory and monitor range condition on 960 acres (100% of uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend every fourth year when allotment is rested.

4248 Kiowa Hill Allotment

Grazing System:	Three pasture deferred rest rotation.		
Animals and AUMs:	Cattle - 209 allowable AUMs		
Seasons of Use:	May 16 to June 15 and October 10 to November 9		
	<i>West Pasture</i>	<i>North Pasture</i>	<i>East Pasture</i>
Year 1	Graze May 16 to Jun 15	Graze Oct 10 to Nov 9	Rest
Year 2	Rest	Graze May 16 to Jun 15	Graze Oct 10 to Nov 9
Year 3	Graze Oct 10 to Nov 9	Rest	Graze May 15 to Jun 15
	This plan allows for complete rest every one pasture every year. Deferring livestock grazing until after seed ripe occurs in one pasture every year.		
Vegetation Treatment:	None planned.		
Range Improvements:	Develop well and 2 miles pipeline to water this, Piñon Hills and North Piñon Allotments for improved livestock distribution.		
Monitoring:	Inventory and monitor range condition on 1,373 acres (50% of uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend in year shown when pastures are rested and reread again as sequence repeats itself; trend is read every third year in a pasture.		

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-4 Grazing Allotment Management Plans**Upper Gorge - Colorado (continued)****4249 Piñon Hills Allotment**

Grazing System: One pasture with full year's rest every three years (deferred until after seed ripe in second year).

Animals and AUMs: Cattle; 502 allowable AUMs

Seasons of Use: May 16 to June 15 and Oct 11 to Dec 24

Year 1 Graze May 16 to Jun 15

Year 2 Graze Oct 11 to Dec 24

Year 3 Rest

Vegetation Treatment: Reseed 359 acres sandy bench range site with cool-season native grasses and forbs. Improve riparian condition by developing additional water gaps along river. Allocate expected forage increase of six AUMs to wildlife/watershed (four AUMs) and livestock (two AUMs).

Range Improvements: Develop new well to water Piñon Hills, Eight Mile, and Mesa Allotments, and pipe water 1 mile to Flat Top and San Luis Hills Allotments. Second well and 2 miles pipeline will water this, Kiowa Hills and North Piñon Allotments. Develop permanent water gaps on river to improve livestock distribution and riparian condition.

Monitoring: Inventory and monitor range condition on 1,723 acres (25% of uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend every three years when allotment is rested.

4250 Eight Mile Allotment

Grazing System: Two pasture rest-rotation with rest every fifth year.

Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 213 allowable AUMs

Seasons of Use: May 15 to May 30 and November 24 to December 15

	<i>East Pasture</i>	<i>West Pasture</i>
Year 1	Graze May 15 to May 30	Graze Nov 24 to Dec 15
Year 2	Graze Nov 24 to Dec 15	Graze May 15 to May 30
Year 3	Graze May 15 to May 30	Graze Nov 24 to Dec 15
Year 4	Graze Nov 24 to Dec 15	Graze May 15 to May 30
Year 5	Rest	Rest

This grazing system allows complete rest every fifth year on the entire allotment.

Vegetation Treatment: Reseed 102 acres sandy bench range site with cool-season native grasses and forbs. Allocate expected increase of three AUMs to wildlife/watershed (two AUMs) and livestock (one AUM).

Range Improvements: Develop well to water Eight-Mile, Piñon Hills, and Mesa Allotments; pipe water 1 mile to Flat Top and San Luis Hills Allotments.

Monitoring: Inventory and monitor range condition on 1,322 acres (50% of the uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend every fifth year when rested.

4251 Mesa Common Allotment

Grazing System: Three pasture deferred rest-rotation.

Animals and AUMs: Sheep - 270 allowable AUMs

Season of Use: January 1 to January 23 and September 15 to October 6

	<i>East Pasture</i>	<i>Middle Pasture</i>	<i>West Pasture</i>
Year 1	Graze Sep 15 to Oct 6	Graze Jan 1 to Jan 23	Rest
Year 2	Graze Jan 1 to Jan 23	Rest	Graze Sep 15 to Oct 6
Year 3	Rest	Graze Sep 15 to Oct 26	Graze Jan 1 to Jan 23

Vegetation Treatment: None planned

Range Improvements: Develop well to water Mesa, Eight-Mile, and Piñon Hills Allotments; pipe water 1 mile to Flat Top and San Luis Hills Allotments. Develop permanent water gaps on river.

Monitoring: Inventory and monitor range condition on 1,043 acres (50% of uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend in year shown when pastures are rested and reread again as sequence repeats itself.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-4 Grazing Allotment Management Plans**Upper Gorge - Colorado (continued)****4252 San Luis Hills Allotment**

Grazing System:	One pasture deferred grazing with rest every third year.
Animals and AUMs:	Sheep - 110 allowable AUMs
Season of Use:	February 1 to February 18
Year 1	Graze February 1 to February 18
Year 2	Graze February 1 to February 18
Year 3	Rest
Vegetation Treatment:	None planned.
Range Improvements:	Develop well to water Eight Mile, Piñon Hills and Mesa Allotments; pipe water 1 mile to this and Flat Top Allotments.
Monitoring:	Inventory and monitor range condition on 905 acres (100% of uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend every third year when allotment is rested.

4253 Flat Top Allotment

Grazing System:	Three pasture deferred rest-rotation grazing (deferred until after seed ripe in all pastures) with complete rest every three years.		
Animals and AUMs:	Sheep; 175 allowable AUMs		
Seasons of Use:	September 15 to September 30 and February 1 to February 14		
	<i>East Pasture</i>	<i>West Pasture</i>	<i>Middle Pasture</i>
Year 1	Graze Sep 15 to Sep 30	Graze Feb 1 to Feb 14	Rest
Year 2	Graze Feb 1 to Feb 14	Rest	Graze Sep 15 to Sep 30
Year 3	Rest	Rest	Rest
Vegetation Treatment:	Reseed 151 acres sandy bench range site with cool-season native grasses and forbs. Improve riparian area by excluding cattle from along river. Allocate expected forage increase of three AUMs to wildlife/watershed (two AUMs) and livestock (one AUM).		
Range Improvements:	Develop permanent water gaps on river to improve livestock distribution and riparian condition. Develop well to water Eight-Mile, Piñon Hills and Mesa Allotments; pipe water 1 mile to this and San Luis Hills Allotment.		
Monitoring:	Inventory and monitor range condition on 790 acres (25% of uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend every third year when allotment is rested.		

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-4 Grazing Allotment Management Plans**4255 La Sauces Allotment**

Grazing System: Three pasture rest-rotation.

Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 138 allowable AUMs

Seasons of Use: May 15 to June 15 and October 30 to November 10

	<i>North Pasture</i>	<i>East Pasture</i>	<i>West Pasture</i>
Year 1	Graze May 15 to Jun 15	Graze Oct 30 to Nov 10	Rest
Year 2	Rest	Graze May 15 to Jun 15	Graze Oct 30 to Nov 10
Year 3	Graze Oct 30 to Nov 10	Rest	Graze May 15 to Jun 15

This grazing plan allows for complete year of rest in one pasture every year. Pastures are not grazed again in spring until the following third year of the cycle. Deferring grazing until after seed ripe occurs in one pasture every year. Year four repeats the cycle.

Vegetation Treatment: Reseed 180 acres sandy bench range site with cool-season native grasses and forbs. Allocate expected forage increase of three AUMs to wildlife/watershed (two AUMs) and livestock (one AUM).

Range Improvements: Equip existing well to water livestock, and develop new well to supply water to this and East Bend Allotment to improve livestock distribution. Install permanent water gaps along river to protect riparian zone.

Monitoring: Inventory and monitor range condition on 1,560 acres (50% of uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend in year shown when pastures are rested and reread again as sequence repeats itself. Trend is read every third year in a pasture.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-4 Grazing Allotment Management Plans**Upper Gorge - Colorado (continued)****4256 East Bend Allotment**

Grazing System:	One pasture deferred grazing (deferred until after seed ripe) with rest every third year.
Animals and AUMs:	Sheep - 150 allowable AUMs
Seasons of Use:	March 1 to March 13 and November 7 to November 18
Year 1	Graze Mar 1 to Mar 13 and Nov 7 to Nov 18
Year 2	Graze Mar 1 to Mar 13 and Nov 7 to Nov 18
Year 3	Rest
	Deferred until after seed ripe.
Vegetation Treatment:	Reseed 125 acres sandy bench range site with cool-season native grasses and forbs. (Refer to recommended actions for Riparian Resources and Sparse Shrub/Grassland Association.) Allocate expected forage increase of 2 AUMs to wildlife (1 AUM) and livestock (1 AUM).
Range Improvements:	Develop new well to supply water to this and La Sauces Allotments to improve livestock distribution.
Monitoring:	Inventory and monitor range condition on 607 acres (50% of uninventoried area) over next 15 years. Monitor trend every third year during allotment rest.

Upper Gorge - New Mexico**606 Wild River Allotment**

Grazing System:	Four pasture deferred rotation system (includes Allotment #641); use excluded during most cool-season growth periods.			
Animals and AUMs:	Cattle - 404 AUMs (275 in planning area)			
Season of Use:	May 1 to November 1			
	<i>641 Pasture</i>	<i>West Pasture</i>	<i>East Pasture</i>	<i>South Pasture (Loop)</i>
Year 1	Graze May 1 to Jun 29	Graze Jun 30 to Aug 15	Graze Aug 16 to Sep 30	Graze Oct 1 to Nov 1
Year 2	Graze Aug 2 to Sep 30	Graze May 1 to Jun 16	Graze Jun 17 to Aug 1	Graze Oct 1 to Nov 1
Year 3	Graze Jun 16 to Aug 14	Graze Aug 15 to Sep 30	Graze May 1 to Jun 15	Graze Oct 1 to Nov 1
Vegetation Treatment:	Mechanically thin or burn 295 acres woodland, and burn 163 acres shrub/grassland to reduce soil erosion, increase species and structural diversity and cool-season grass component. Allocate expected forage increase of eight AUMs to wildlife/watershed.			
Range Improvements:	None planned.			
Monitoring:	Monitor range condition at least once every three years.			
Note:	Grazing in the South Pasture (loop) will be eliminated upon completion of vegetative projects proposed in a settlement agreement, dated 1991.			

608 Guadalupe Allotment

Grazing System:	No system in place; one pasture allotment with no fence, allowing cattle to graze 2,060 acres of unleased public and state land.
Animals and AUMs:	Cattle - 210 AUMs
Season of Use:	May 1 to July 30 (each year) Partial cool season rest prior to May 1. Partial warm season rest after July 30
Vegetation Treatment:	Mechanically thin or burn 458 acres woodland, and burn 61 acres shrub/grassland to reduce soil erosion, increase species and structural diversity and cool-season grass component. Allocate expected forage increase of six AUMs to wildlife/watershed.
Range Improvements:	None planned; permittee will haul water to various parts of allotment to improve livestock distribution.
Monitoring:	Monitor range condition at least once every five years.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-4 Grazing Allotment Management Plans**Upper Gorge - New Mexico (continued)****624 Carson Road Allotment**

Grazing System: No system in place; one pasture allotment with no fence, allowing cattle to graze additional acreage of unleased public and private land. Grazing deferred until after cool season seed ripe.

Animals & AUMs: Cattle - 19 AUMs (approximate)

Season of Use: June 15 to October 10 (each year)

Vegetation Treatment: Burn 322 acres shrub/grassland to reduce soil erosion, increase species and structural diversity and cool-season grass component.

Range Improvements: None planned.

Monitoring: Monitor range condition at least once every 10 years.

626 Carson Allotment

Grazing System: No system in place; one pasture allotment with no fence, allowing cattle to graze additional acreage of unleased public and private land.

Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 154 AUMs

Season of Use: May 1 to October 10

Each Year Graze from May 1 to Oct 10 (each year partial cool season rest prior to May 1)

Vegetation Treatment: None planned.

Range Improvements: None planned.

Monitoring: Monitor range condition at least once every five years.

640 Guadalupe Mountain Allotment

Grazing System: Two pasture deferred rotation (one pasture in this allotment, other in #641).

Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 145 AUMs

Seasons of Use: May 1 to June 20 and September 1 to October 20 (warm season rest and partial cool season rest prior to May 1)

640 Pasture

Year 1 Graze May 1 to Jun 20

Year 2 Graze Sep 1 to Oct 20

641 Pasture

Graze Sep 1 to Oct 20

Graze May 1 to Jul 1

Vegetation Treatment: Mechanically thin or burn 410 acres woodland, and burn 107 acres shrub/grassland to reduce soil erosion, increase species and structural diversity and cool-season grass component. Allocate expected forage increase of eight AUMs to wildlife/watershed.

Range Improvements: None planned.

Monitoring: Monitor range condition at least once every three years.

Lower Gorge**503 Embudo Allotment**

Grazing System: None proposed; one pasture system with approved non-use since 1993.

Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 17 AUMs

Season of Use: February 8 to February 28 (each year - dormant season grazing)

Vegetation Treatment: None planned.

Range Improvements: None planned.

Monitoring: Monitor range condition at least once every three years.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-4 Grazing Allotment Management Plans**Lower Gorge (continued)****514 Cerro Azul Allotment**

Grazing System: None proposed; one pasture allotment.

Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 23 AUMs (approximate)

Season of Use: October 15 to October 31 (each year - dormant season grazing)

Vegetation Treatment: Burn 222 acres shrub/grassland to reduce soil erosion, increase species and structural diversity and cool-season grass component. No actions planned to treat allotment's woodland because of unstable soils and increased potential for erosion. Allocate expected forage increase of two AUMs to wildlife/watershed.

Range Improvements: None planned.

Monitoring: Monitor range condition at least once every five years.

515 Glen Woody Allotment

Grazing System: None proposed; one pasture allotment with voluntary non-use approved since 1992.

Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 25 AUMs (approximate)

Season of Use: December 1 to February 28 (each year - dormant season grazing)

Vegetation Treatment: None planned because of steep slopes and concern for increased erosion.

Range Improvements: Construct 2 miles boundary fence between public and private land, develop one permanent water source.

Monitoring: Monitor range condition at least once every five years.

516 Pilar Allotment

Grazing System: None proposed; one pasture allotment.

Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 8 AUMs

Season of Use: September 15 to November 19 (each year - dormant season grazing)

Vegetation Treatment: None planned.

Range Improvements: None planned.

Monitoring: Monitor range condition at least once every 10 years.

517 Hondo Allotment

Grazing System: Three pasture allotment (one private, two BLM) with deferred rotation.

Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 64 AUMs

Season of Use: June 15 to December 1

	<i>North Pasture</i>	<i>South Pasture</i>	<i>Private Pasture</i>
Year 1	Graze Jun 15 to Aug 22	Graze Aug 23 to Oct 24	Graze Oct 25 to Dec 1
Year 2	Graze Sep 24 to Dec 1	Graze Jun 15 to Aug 16	Graze Aug 17 to Sept 23
Year 3	Graze Jul 23 to Sep 29	Graze Sep 30 to Dec 1	Graze June 15 to July 2

Defer grazing until after cool season seed ripe. When crops are grown on the private pasture, the permit will be adjusted to reflect the reduced availability of forage.

Vegetation Treatment: Burn 546 acres shrub/grassland to reduce soil erosion, increase species and structural diversity and amount of cool-season grasses. No actions planned to treat woodland because of unstable soils and increased potential for erosion. Allocate expected forage increase of five AUMs to wildlife/watershed.

Range Improvements: None planned.

Monitoring: Monitor range condition at least once every 10 years.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Table 3-4 Grazing Allotment Management Plans**Lower Gorge (continued)****636 Pajarito Allotment**

Grazing System: Develop three pasture rest-rotation system to exclude livestock grazing from one BLM pasture each year.

Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 186 AUMs (approximate)

Season of Use: November 1 to February 28 (dormant season grazing)

	<i>North Pasture</i>	<i>West Pasture</i>	<i>East Pasture</i>
Year 1	Rest	Graze Nov 1 to Dec 30	Graze Dec 31 to Feb 28
Year 2	Graze Jan 23 to Feb 28	Rest	Graze Nov 1 to Jan 22
Year 3	Graze Nov 11 to Dec 7	Graze Dec 8 to Feb 28	Rest

Vegetation Treatment: Burn 539 acres shrub/grassland to increase species and structural diversity and cool-season grass component. No actions planned for woodland because of unstable soils and increased potential for erosion. Allocate expected forage increase of 13 AUMs to wildlife/watershed.

Range Improvements: Adjust allotment boundary to exclude Comanche Spring area, construct 4.5 miles allotment boundary fence. These actions will reduce authorized AUMs by 24 to 38. To improve livestock distribution, construct 1.8 miles pasture fence and provide two or three water sources. (These actions may increase AUMs for grazing, but reallocation will be made only when monitoring studies indicated that additional AUMs are available.)

Monitoring: Monitor range condition at least once every two years.

Copper Hill**521 Cuestecita Allotment**

Grazing System: None proposed; two pasture allotment.

Animals and AUMs: Cattle - 34 AUMs short term. Grazing privileges retained only for current permittee; grazing to be excluded upon relinquishment of permit, with no permit transfers allowed.

Season of Use: June 15 to September 30

	<i>North Pasture</i>	<i>Private Pasture</i>
Year 1	Graze Jun 15 to Aug 31	Graze Sep 1 to Sep 30
Year 2	Graze Jul 15 to Sep 30	Graze Jun 15 to Jul 14

Defer grazing until after cool season seed maturity. When crops are grown on the private pasture, the permit will be adjusted.

Vegetation Treatment: Burn 586 acres shrub/grassland to reduce soil erosion, increase species and structural diversity and cool-season grass component. Allocate expected forage increase of four AUMs to wildlife/watershed.

Range Improvements: None planned.

Monitoring: Monitor range condition at least once every five years.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

MINERALS

Development of locatable mineral claims (for gold, silver and other hardrock minerals) will continue to require the filing of a Notice (for activity affecting less than five acres) and/or a Plan of Operation (for all operations in an ACEC or for those of five acres or more). A Notice gives the BLM an opportunity to review the activity and recommend to the operator measures to avoid degradation. A Plan of Operation allows for full review of the mining proposal, with opportunity for public comment and development of mitigating measures to ensure that no unnecessary or undue degradation occurs

As a general rule, all public lands not within Wilderness Study Areas and/or not closed to mineral leasing are available for oil, gas, geothermal and carbon dioxide exploration, leasing and development. Site-specific decisions on lease issuance and stipulations are described in the *San Luis RMP* (USDI, BLM 1991) and the *Taos RMP Amendment for Oil and Gas Leasing and Development* (USDI, BLM 1991).

The sale of mineral materials is a discretionary, not mandatory, action. Applications for the removal of common-variety mineral materials including sand, gravel, fill, volcanic cinders, and brick clay, and the casual collection of fossil wood will be based on restrictions contained in the RMPs, this CRMP, and applicable Supplemental Rules.

Locatable Mining

The BLM will allow locatable mineral entry on 49,931 acres, primarily in the Upper Gorge Unit under the Final Plan. A total of 73,820 acres will be under withdrawal to protect resources that could be affected by surface disturbance and/or facility development. The additional withdrawals listed below will apply to all public lands in the area described, along with any parcels acquired by the BLM at a later date. A total of

14,122 acres of private and State lands will be withdrawn if acquired by the BLM under the Final Plan.

All public lands within the Wild Rivers Recreation Area will be withdrawn in the Upper Gorge Unit. All public lands within the Lower Gorge and Copper Hill ACECs will be withdrawn.

Leasable Minerals

Existing mineral leasing closures or limits will continue in the Upper Gorge, with an additional 14,906 acres subject to the No Surface Occupancy stipulation for oil and gas development. An additional 90 acres will be closed to mineral leasing if acquired by the BLM. The entire Lower Gorge Unit will be closed to leasing activity. Mineral and geothermal leasing will not be allowed in the Agua Caliente and Rio Embudo Protection Zones (an additional 4,550 acres) to protect Mexican spotted owl habitat and scenic quality. Leasing in the Lower Embudo Cultural Protection Zone will be authorized with a No Surface Occupancy stipulation.

Mineral Materials

No sales will be approved in the Rio Grande Corridor ACEC, the Flat Top Mountain (2,000 acres) portion of the San Luis Hills ACEC, the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River, and the Wild Rivers Recreation Area. No sales will be made from the Lower Gorge Unit, except at four sites that will remain open (the Rinconada, Dixon and La Mesita pits and Arroyo Hondo building block area near Pilar) until the materials are exhausted. The Copper Hill ACEC will be closed except for three sites (Piedra Lumbre, Hilltop and Canada del Oso). See Map 5 for mineral material site locations.

PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Guidance for management of prehistoric and historic resources on public lands is provided by various federal laws passed by Congress over the past century, particularly Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act (as amended), Antiquities Act (1906), Executive Order 11593, American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978), Archeological Resources Protection Act (1979), and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990). The BLM must take into account the effects of its actions or authorizations on cultural resources. Agency policy is to avoid disturbing cultural sites, so cultural inventories are required before surface disturbance. If sites cannot be avoided mitigation must be carried out, ranging from making detailed records to total salvage.

Specific recommendations are as follows:

Upper Gorge

The BLM will inventory 10% of this portion of the planning area in Colorado by 2002, in addition to conducting inventories when ground-disturbing activities are proposed. Any location with heavy visitation will be inventoried and the monitoring frequency increased from current levels. Sites that are eligible for the National Register and able to withstand visitation will be interpreted.

In New Mexico, the Wild Rivers Recreation Area will be expanded to include public lands in the Guadalupe Mountains that contain cultural resource sites. The BLM will complete a 100% inventory of Wild Rivers Recreation Area for cultural resources and nominate appropriate sites to the National

Register of Historic Places. Cultural resources and selected sites will continue to be interpreted for the public. The Big Arsenic Springs petroglyph site will remain open to public use and monitored on a regular basis. Guided hikes for visitors will continue to provide some awareness and education to help visitors respect the values associated with the site. The BLM will interpret historic and prehistoric resources at the John Dunn Bridge and Manby Hot Springs for visitors.

Lower Gorge

The BLM will complete an inventory of cultural resources and provide interpretation where feasible in Orilla Verde Recreation Area. The highest priority for inventory will be areas of intensive recreation use.

Copper Hill

The Lower Embudo Special Management Area will become a part of the new Copper Hill ACEC, and will be managed under the prescriptions outlined under A New Mexico RMP-Level Decisions described as follows. A Class III (100%) cultural resources inventory of the Lower Embudo Cultural zone will be completed, and all archaeological sites will be recorded. This inventory will be phased over time and tied to priority areas (based on protection needs). Archaeological sites will be nominated, as appropriate, to the National Register of Historic Places. Access to the pueblo ruins in the Lower Embudo Cultural Protection Zone will be limited to permitted users only. Fire suppression techniques causing earth disturbance (e.g., fire lines built by bulldozers or hand tools, off-road vehicles) will not be used within this zone.



PUBLIC EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

Under the Final Plan the BLM will complete an interpretive plan following the guidelines of the Rio Grande Gorge Interpretive Prospectus. BLM will establish guidelines for signs to provide a consistent appearance and message throughout the planning area, provide a better appreciation of the resources and local custom and culture, and to better identify opportunities and help minimize conflicts. Most interpretive signs and brochures will be available in both English and Spanish. Signs will be posted at river access points to provide information on the location of adjacent access points, the length of river segments, safety concerns and emergency services. BLM will also establish partnerships with a wider range of users (e.g., fishing, hiking, mountain biking) to help inform them of public land opportunities as well as responsibilities.

The BLM will not provide onsite interpretation at any areas in the Copper Hill Unit, but will provide specific information or interpretive services at the following sites:

Upper Gorge

- C La Sauses, Lobatos Bridge, and other sites in Colorado: Place emphasis on riparian restoration, river-related resources, raptors, and historic sites and uses. Implement interpretation of sites through Los Caminos Antiguos Historic and Scenic Byway partnerships;
- C Wild Rivers Visitor Center: Continue displays of resource management issues, human manipulation of vegetation, and fire as a management tool;
- C La Junta Point: Increase ranger patrols and contact with visitors, self-guided nature trails, and plans for interpretive signing focusing on geology and Wild and Scenic Rivers;
- C John Dunn Bridge: Post directional signs. Continue weekend river ranger patrols to permit boating use, provide information, and direct traffic. Place signing to support parking and use restrictions/controls at the bridge and springs;
- C Manby Springs: Post interpretive signing to encourage protection of cultural resources;
- C Rio Grande Gorge Bridge: Develop interpretive signing on bridge and parking areas focusing on the bridge; impact of the gorge on transportation, geology and watchable wildlife; and the Wild and

Scenic River system in partnership with the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department;

- C Place directional signs at all trailheads;

Lower Gorge

- C Taos Junction Bridge: Acquire land or develop a land use agreement and put interpretive signing in place to describe site's history, river ethics, and leave no trace practices;
- C La Vista Verde Trail: Install a sign at the trail-head about hiker safety, cultural resources protection and vegetation. Provide BLM ranger presence, including guided hikes;
- C Orilla Verde Campground: Replace the current contact station with an unstaffed facility to provide exhibits describing the area's recreation opportunities, sites of interest, riparian ecosystem, cultural resources, safety, wildlife, geology, and native plants. A nearby volunteer host site will allow for personal visitor contacts in summer;
- C Rio Grande Gorge Visitor Center: Provide displays and interactive videos, about the Rio Grande Gorge's recreation opportunities, history and resources. Promote visitor etiquette toward resources and education about local custom and culture. The visitor center will serve as a hub for environmental education with local and visiting school groups. Formal presentations will be given on a variety of topics of interest to visitors and local residents;
- C Pilar North Parking Area: Provide river ranger patrols and limited informational signing;
- C Quartzite Recreation Site: Develop interpretive signs describing key resources and river characteristics, and increase river ranger presence;
- C Racecourse Parking Sites: Provide interpretive signs at larger sites receiving the heaviest visitor use, and focus on Wild and Scenic River management, watchable wildlife, and natural and cultural features of interest;
- C County Line/Rinconada Overlook: Provide signing focusing on riparian area protection;
- C Lover's Lane: Increase patrol of the site; and
- C Embudo Station: Provide some patrols and interpretive signing on river use, local history and good neighbor guidelines in cooperation with landowners.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

RIPARIAN RESOURCES

BLM riparian areas in New Mexico and Colorado are managed under general guidelines provided by the agency's *Riparian/Wetland Initiative for the 1990s* (USDI, BLM 1991). The BLM in New Mexico has developed more specific riparian policy and program guidelines that will provide management direction for this habitat in the planning area (*Riparian 2000*).

A total of 344 acres of public land with (or with potential for) riparian vegetation exist in the planning area, 127 acres in Colorado and 217 acres in New Mexico. The BLM will continue the withdrawal of these areas from mineral entry and will keep them closed to mineral and geothermal leasing. Under the Final Plan, grazing will be eliminated from all riparian areas with the exception of one allotment in New Mexico; where over the long term grazing will be excluded and in Colorado except at water gaps, until proper functioning condition is achieved. Vehicle access, where practical, will not be allowed within 25 feet of perennial streams, unless mitigating measures are applied. Vegetation removal, with the exception of exotic species, will continue to be prohibited. In New Mexico, riparian areas will be included in new or enlarged ACECs or recreation areas to provide for special management and protection of these resources.

Upper Gorge - Colorado

BLM will continue to work with local groups to eliminate unauthorized livestock grazing in riparian areas by cattle moving from private lands on the east side of the Rio Grande. Grazing will continue in the riparian areas of the La Sauses (#4255), Piñon Hills (#4249), Mesa Common (#4251), Piñon (#4245A and B), and Flat Top (#4253) allotments at small water gaps (about 2.5 acres total). The remainder of the riparian area in these allotments will be allowed to rest until the standards for a properly functioning riparian area are met on 124.5 acres. Once in proper functioning condition, grazing will be allowed as long as a four inch stubble height on herbaceous species is maintained through the May to June high-water season, no more than 20% of the annual growth of woody riparian species is used by livestock, and the area's ecological health is maintained. All vehicle travel routes within riparian areas between the La Sauses Cemetery and the Lobatos Bridge (on the west side) will be closed to vehicle use. In addition, the agency will treat closed routes to enhance riparian vegetation (on 0.5 acre) and will plant on another ten acres with willows and three acres with cottonwoods

over the first five years following plan approval to restore native species. Additional plantings will be undertaken as additional funding and partnerships become available.

Upper Gorge - New Mexico

BLM will manage 48 miles of the Rio Grande and four miles of the Red River to conserve the riparian vegetation that is considered to be in properly functioning condition. BLM will enhance a portion of the riparian area at the John Dunn Bridge (0.1 acre) by restricting turnaround and parking space to an area sufficient for five cars at the east-side beach. The launch site on the river's west side at the John Dunn Bridge will be slightly expanded. These actions will provide a net gain of .05 acre of riparian vegetation.

Lower Gorge

Riparian habitat will be maintained or improved by improving roads and trails, by removing exotic plant species and by excluding grazing from all riparian areas. The BLM's goal of improving riparian condition on nine acres will be achieved by closing several sites to vehicles including the river access road at the Arroyo Hondo Campground, public lands at the confluence of the Rio Grande and Rio Embudo, a vehicle pullout located 0.5 mile south of Embudo Station on the east shore, and the pullout located just upstream from the Velarde Diversion Dam (also on the east shore). The public land at Lovers' Lane will be closed to vehicles, as well as most of the adjacent private lands if they are acquired (parking will only be available on a 0.5-acre area between NM 68 and the cottonwoods). Salt cedar removal will continue at the Orilla Verde Recreation Area on an additional two acres. Grazing will be excluded from all riparian areas in the Lower Gorge ACEC.

The agency will attempt to acquire 2,510 acres of private land adjacent to the Taos Junction Bridge and manage the 1.5 miles of shoreline for riparian habitat by closing selected areas (totaling 1.4 acres) to vehicle use (two acres east of the Taos Junction Bridge will remain open to shoreline uses).

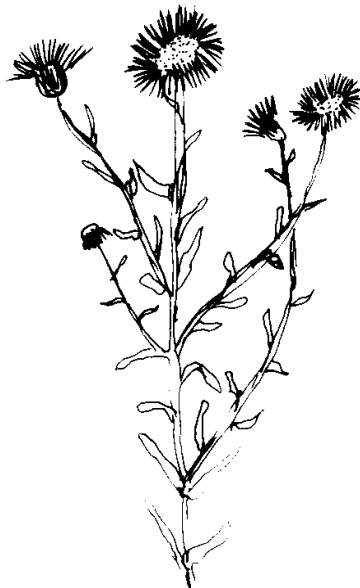
Seven miles of riparian habitat located along five short stream segments within the Copper Hill Unit will be managed to improve their current riparian classification of functioning at risk. The BLM will closely monitor grazing within the Rio de las Trampas and Cañada de Ojo Sarco riparian areas (in the Cuestecita Allotment, #521) to ensure properly

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

functioning riparian condition. Only the current permittees would retain their grazing privileges (no permit transfers will be allowed) with grazing to be excluded upon relinquishment of the permit. All other areas within the unit will be excluded from grazing.

Monitoring activities in riparian areas usually varies in intensity and complexity, but is used as a means of guiding progress towards identified objectives. In most cases, a lower intensity of monitoring will occur on areas that are at their potential, are not deteriorated, or have little likelihood of producing resource benefits. Table 3-5 displays the minimum frequency of monitoring to measure the achievement of objectives in the Final Plan.

Table 3-5 Riparian Monitoring	
Type	Frequency
Photo points at key areas	every year
Ecological site inventory (Colorado)	3 years
Aerial photography interpretation	every 5 years or as needed
Woody species density	every 5 years or as needed
Woody species form, vigor, and utilization class	every 5 years or as needed
Woody species age class	every 5 years or as needed
Stream channel cross sections	every 5 years or as needed
Note: In New Mexico, riparian areas will be included in new or enlarged ACECs or recreation areas to provide for special management and protection of these resources. Refer to Chapter 2 for a description of these special management areas.	



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

SCENIC QUALITY AND VISUAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (VRM)

The BLM uses its VRM system to assign appropriate VRM classes to public land in the planning area (refer to Table 3-6 for a description of the BLM's VRM classes). To determine whether or not a project will meet VRM class guidelines, the agency uses the contrast rating system.

Table 3-6 Visual Resource Management Classes	
Class I	To preserve the existing character of the landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes; however, it does not preclude very limited management activity. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention.
Class II	To retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.
Class III	To partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.
Class IV	To provide for management activities that require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance and repeating the basic landscape elements.

The VRM system, therefore, provides a means to identify visual (scenic) values, establish objectives through the Resource Management Planning process or on a case-by-case basis for managing these values, and provides timely input into proposed surface-disturbing projects to ensure the assigned objectives are met. See Table 3-7 for a summary of VRM class assignments.

All public lands have been assigned a VRM class to set guidelines for projects that could change the appearance of local landscape or structures. BLM will provide for reestablishment of vegetation through natural processes or by seeding to enhance scenic quality in existing disturbed areas or areas where roads have been closed.

Upper Gorge - Colorado

VRM Class II will continue to be assigned to 16,457 acres in the San Luis Hills WSA and the foreground of the Rio Grande Corridor ACEC (as seen from the river). VRM Class III guidelines will continue to apply to the remaining 31,323 acres in Colorado. Scenic and visual quality will be maintained through guidelines for existing special area designations.

Upper Gorge - New Mexico

VRM Class I will be assigned to the 12,413 acres adjoining the wild segments of the Rio Grande and Red Wild and Scenic Rivers. VRM Class III will apply to 21 acres in developed recreation sites within Wild Rivers Recreation Area, including the BLM Visitor Center, Sheeps Crossing, Chiflo, Bear Crossing, Chawalauna, Big Arsenic, Little Arsenic, Montoso, La Junta and El Aguaje. VRM Class II will be assigned to the remaining 24,143 acres in the New Mexico portion of this unit. To preserve scenic quality, the BLM will acquire state and private land in the unit (both surface and subsurface) on a willing seller basis (refer to Table 3-2 for a list of these parcels).

Lower Gorge

VRM Class I will be assigned to those lands in the Orilla Verde Recreation Area above the rim that are bounded by NM 68, the north rim of the Arroyo Hondo drainage, and the east rim of the Rio Grande Gorge (if the lands are acquired). VRM Class II will be assigned to 5,743 acres of the Orilla Verde Recreation Area and 16,347 acres in the remainder of the unit. VRM Class III will be assigned to 24 acres of the unit's developed recreation sites below the rim of the gorge.

BLM will designate the public land south of the Orilla Verde Recreation Area as the Lower Gorge ACEC to protect the visual quality of the Lower Gorge Unit. Rights-of-way in the ACEC will be strictly limited and the area withdrawn from public land and mining laws. The BLM will acquire State and private land (both surface and subsurface) on a

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

willing seller basis, with priority given to undeveloped land (refer to Table 3-2). To improve scenic quality, the BLM will redesign and landscape the Pilar North Parking Area and developed recreation sites, revegetate closed roads, and rehabilitate the old mining site near the Taos Junction Campground. The agency will also develop partnerships with the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department and Public Service Company of New Mexico to improve the appearance of the NM 68 and 570 rights-of-way and the gas line parallel to NM 68.

Copper Hill

The BLM will protect the visual resources of the unit by designating all public lands as the Copper Hill ACEC. VRM Class I will be assigned to 1,775 acres of the Rio Embudo and Agua Caliente Wild and Scenic River study segments. VRM Class II will be assigned to 4,789 acres. VRM Class III will be assigned to 10,716 acres in the ACEC's Central Protection Zone. State and private lands in the ACEC will be acquired on a willing seller basis. The ACEC will be managed to limit surface-disturbing activities.

Table 3-7 Visual Resource Management Classes Assigned to the Planning Area		
Plan Area	VRM Class	Acreage
Upper Gorge - Colorado	I	C
	II	16,457
	III	31,323
	IV (no assignment)	C
Upper Gorge - New Mexico	I	12,413
	II	24,143
	III	21
	IV (no assignment)	C
Lower Gorge	I	C
	II	22,090
	III	24
	IV (no assignment)	C
Copper Hill	I	1,775
	II	4,789
	III	10,716
	IV (no assignment)	C
Planning Area Totals (rounded)	I	14,190
	II	67,480
	III	42,080
	IV (no assignment)	C
Total		123,750

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT (SOIL, VEGETATION AND WATER RESOURCES)

National guidance for management of vegetation resources is provided in documents such as the *Public Domain Woodlands Management Policy Statement* (1982) and the Public Rangelands Improvement Act (1978). The San Luis and Taos RMPs also direct management of vegetation resources as part of the livestock grazing, forestry, wildlife, fire suppression and vegetation programs. The BLM is mandated to improve and protect soil and water quality, prevent deterioration where technically and economically feasible, and rehabilitate watersheds in unacceptable condition. The agency must also prevent or minimize threats to public health and safety, damage to natural site characteristics, and economic losses that are the result of floods, sedimentation, decreased water and soil quality, accelerated runoff, and erosion on public land. The BLM will continue to implement the following actions and guidelines:

- C Study the interaction between streamflow and riparian habitat. The Taos and La Jara Field Offices will continue to work with BLM's National Applied Resource Science Center to study stream channel morphology and flows in order to assess the habitat's ability to provide for fisheries resources, consistent with goals of state wildlife agencies, and determine where in the planning area these goals can be reasonably achieved;
- C Take the lead to initiate a water resources management group which will meet annually to explore water quantity and quality issues in the planning corridor. BLM will request participation by the Rio Grande Water Conservation District, Colorado Division of Water Resources (Division 3), Colorado Division of Wildlife, San Luis Valley Ecosystem Council, Rio Grande Corridor Advisory Committee, Rio Grande Restoration, New Mexico Environment Department, Colorado State Health Department, New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U. S. Geological Survey;
- C Use Best Management Practices (BMPs), such as those outlined in the *Soil and Water Conservation Practices Handbook* (USDA, Forest Service) to reduce nonpoint source pollution and conduct monitoring designed to measure the effectiveness of implemented practices;
- C Comply with the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (1972), as amended, Clean Water Act (1977), and Safe Drinking Water Act (1974). Drinking water provided by the BLM is regularly tested and the results submitted to the State. The BLM will retain certified water system operators for all of its public water supply sources;
- C Follow water quality standards for all water bodies set by the New Mexico and Colorado Water Quality Control Commissions. The BLM has a Memorandum of Understanding with New Mexico and Colorado to reduce nonpoint source pollution from activities on public lands. One key tool in reducing nonpoint source pollution is to identify and apply BMPs for every activity with the potential to impact water quality. BMPs are to be identified in every environmental assessment (EA), and must be effective and efficient at accomplishing the project's intended purpose;
- C Indirectly monitor water quality by conducting periodic surveys for parasites and other components that may adversely affect human health, and by monitoring vegetation loss from surface-disturbing activities. Vegetation is a major factor controlling the amount and timing of erosion from a site. By rehabilitating or manipulating the volume, form and density of vegetation, the BLM can most directly influence water quality. Water quality also will be directly monitored through occasional sampling of chemical content and temperature;
- C Follow the objectives of the BLM water rights program, which are to (1) cooperate with state governments under state law to protect all water used for public land management, (2) conform to applicable state water rights laws and procedures, and (3) protect existing water rights;
- C Develop projects as needed to control exotic and noxious weeds. In the New Mexico portion of the planning area, actions will be directed by the *Weed Prevention Plan* (USDI, BLM 1996). Actions will include stipulating the use of weed-free seed mixes and feed or straw bedding, reseeding of all areas disturbed by planned actions, and providing extra care to keep human activities in weed-infested areas from spreading the infestation. Complete a plan to determine the best strategy for controlling tamarisk and noxious weeds and reestablishing native vegetation to improve biodiversity within Orilla Verde Recreation Area;
- C Contain all fires on public land, including those threatening private lands during the first burning period (refer to the Glossary), except in areas where an approved fire management plan is in effect. For the areas outside of the BLM's full suppression zones, the BLM will prepare fire management plans to meet "let burn" or "partial burn" objectives. The

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

agency may conduct prescribed burns to support resource management objectives; burn plans must be completed before such fires can occur. If burning is unsuccessful in meeting vegetation objectives, sites will be treated with herbicides. Environmental Protection Agency guidelines require that no herbicides be applied within 0.5 mile of a residence, developed recreation site, or perennial stream;

- C Limit fire suppression within Wild Rivers Recreation Area to the methods least disturbing to soils and vegetation and limit fuelwood and timber sales to those that will enhance wildlife habitat;
- C Conduct fire suppression activities within Orilla Verde Recreation Area in a manner least disturbing to soils and vegetation;
- C Fully suppress any unplanned fires within the full-suppression zone in the Lower Gorge ACEC. In the remainder of the ACEC, fire prescriptions and burn plans will be developed to meet vegetation management objectives;
- C Manage all woodland and forestry resources within the Copper Hill ACEC to enhance wildlife habitat, ecosystem health, and scenic values. Use limited techniques to suppress fires in the Lower Embudo Cultural Protection Zone. Suppression techniques causing earth disturbance (e.g., fire lines built by bulldozers or hand tools and off-road vehicles) will not be used within this zone; and
- C Improve watershed and wildlife habitat conditions, close 76.3 miles of roads to motorized vehicles.

Colorado

Sparse Shrub/Grassland: BLM will develop three test plots in the sandy bench range type. On one plot native cool-season seed (such as Western wheatgrass or Indian ricegrass) will be broadcast. Another plot will be reseeded with the same species, but by drill-ling instead of by broadcast. The third plot will be a control plot where no treatment will be applied. If these tests are successful, up to 4% of the range sites (1,124 acres) will be reseeded by the best method over the life of the plan, as funding became available. Treated areas will be rested from livestock grazing for two years to ensure greater success.

If the tests are unsuccessful, BLM will develop partnerships with universities or colleges for graduate studies to determine other methods for successfully reestablishing desirable species on these sites. The best available methods will be used until desired species are reestablished on 4% of the range sites. In the Flat Top Mountain WSA, only native species will be reestablished using broadcast seeding by hand.

Savanna Woodland: Allow no fuelwood gathering within the planning area in Colorado. Any woodlands within this part of the planning area that are considered operable are inaccessible because roads are lacking. No roads will be constructed for fuelwood gathering.

New Mexico

Oakbrush Woodland: The BLM will burn 184 acres in New Mexico to create a diverse growth structure and restore habitat through planned and natural ignition. Burns will only take place on lands with less than a 20% slope.

Savanna Woodland: BLM will treat 4,236 acres in areas where stand expansion has occurred using mechanical thinning methods or planned/natural burning. Burns will only take place on lands with no more than 33% slopes. The public will be allowed to harvest a minimum of 75% of the wood treated.

Piñon-Juniper Woodland: BLM will mechanically thin or burn (by planned or natural ignition) 2,994 acres of piñon-juniper woodland. Areas selected for treatment will have slopes of less than 20% and will not be on ridges or north slopes. To create a mosaic pattern only 20% of a particular area will be treated, and treated sites will not be replanted. Prescribed burns will be scheduled three to five years after mechanical thinning to remove seedlings. Each area treated will have one or two snags left per acre for wildlife. The public will be allowed to harvest a minimum of 75% of the wood treated.

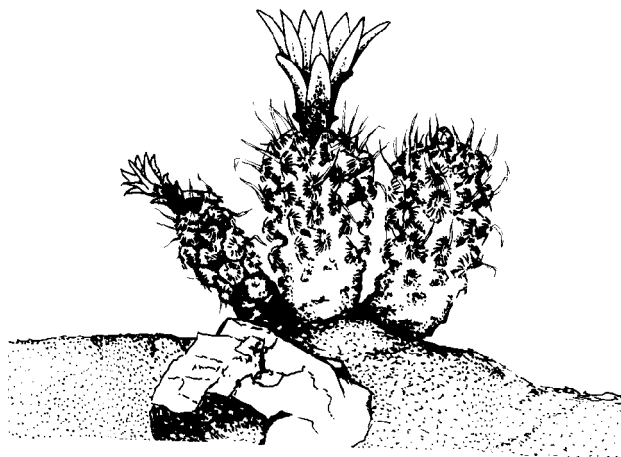
Mixed Conifer Woodland: Approximately 9,744 acres in the New Mexico portion of the planning area are covered by mixed conifer woodland. About 20% of this area (1,642 acres) will be mechanically thinned to improve the competitive advantage for ponderosa pine, reduce the potential for catastrophic fire, and allow the natural fire process to be reestablished. The total square footage of remaining trunks (of all species) will average 40 to 80 square feet per acre treated. The areas to be treated will be selected where slopes were less than 20% avoiding ridges and north slopes and to maintain these treated stands, the BLM will carry out burns (planned or natural) at three to five-year intervals to keep seedlings under control. A minimum of five snags per acre will be left as wildlife habitat. The public will be allowed to harvest a minimum of 75% of the wood treated under the Final Plan.

Shrub/Grassland: BLM will burn 3,523 acres to improve ecological condition and species composition

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

through planned or natural ignition. Areas will be rested from livestock grazing for a year if needed to ensure enough fuel for a proper controlled burn. Burn plans will be tailored to ensure that 50 to 75% of the shrubs are killed to create a mosaic pattern. BLM will limit treatment to sites with slopes less than 20%. No more than 33% of any site with this type of

vegetation will be treated. Burned areas will be reseeded with native species where the potential exists for invasion by noxious weeds, cheatgrass or other undesirable species. The agency will rest treated areas from livestock grazing for at least two years to allow reestablishment of grasses.



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

In Colorado, 41 miles of the Rio Grande (including 22 miles in the planning area) will remain under interim protection. The Wild and Scenic River (W&SR) designations on 64 miles of the Rio Grande and four miles of the Red River will not change. BLM will recommend an additional 12.6 miles of river for designation by Congress, as described below.

The BLM has considered all rivers and streams in the planning area to determine what additional evaluations are needed. Table 3-8 identifies the river or stream segments and briefly describes the BLM's findings. Five streams have been determined to be eligible for consideration as Wild and Scenic Rivers (the eligibility studies and tentative classifications are included in Appendix 3). Because most of these streams extend onto Carson National Forest lands, the BLM will complete suitability analyses in coordination with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) within the next several years.

Within the planning area, 108.7 miles of rivers or streams will be protected for these values, either as designated W&SRs or under interim protection (refer to Table 3-7).

The BLM will work with Taos and Rio Arriba counties to develop local land use plans to meet the objectives of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. BLM will continue to take the following actions to manage wild and scenic rivers:

- C Manage designated W&SRs following guidelines established by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968;
- C Provide protection for all areas found eligible for designation as W&SRs until Congress makes its decision. [Refer to the San Luis RMP for the study of the 41-mile-long segment of the Rio Grande in Colorado (USDI, BLM 1991); and
- C Allow uses of the public (or adjacent private) land in the wild and scenic corridors that were being practiced or were approved before the rivers were designated to continue to the same degree, if compatible with management objectives.

Upper Gorge - Colorado

In the Colorado portion of this unit, the BLM has recommended a 22-mile segment of the Rio Grande from the La Sauses Cemetery to the New Mexico state line as suitable for designation, with 14 miles from the cemetery to the Lobatos Bridge as scenic, and

eight miles from the bridge to the State line as wild. The BLM is managing this segment under interim management restrictions to protect their wild and scenic values beyond the turn of the century until Congress designates these river stretches. (The interim boundaries are 0.25 mile from the ordinary high-water mark on each side of the river.)

Upper Gorge - New Mexico

In New Mexico, the Rio Grande between the State line and the Taos Junction Bridge (48 miles) and four miles of the Red River were among the first rivers designated in 1968. These segments will continue to be managed for their wild and scenic values. The BLM will continue to jointly manage the Carson National Forest portion of the W&SR.

Lower Gorge

BLM will manage the 12-mile segment of the Rio Grande designated as scenic in 1994 to maintain its recognized values. A permanent boundary will be recommended to Congress as shown on Map 4. The W&SR boundary between T 23 N, R 10 E, Section 15 SW1/4, NE1/4, and the west boundary of Section 20, will be moved to the north side of the highway right-of-way, accommodating future highway expansion without compromising W&SR values. The 7.6-mile-long study segment identified in the 1994 legislation will be recommended to Congress for designation with a recreational classification and recommended boundaries as shown on Map 4.

Copper Hill

BLM will recommend a five-mile segment of the Rio Embudo for designation as a wild component of the W&SR System. Proposed boundaries are shown on Map 4, and management prescriptions will be those discussed throughout the description of this Final Plan.

BLM will complete joint suitability studies with the Carson National Forest on adjoining portions of the following 10.1 miles of streams and river segments (tentative classifications are shown in parentheses): Arroyo Hondo (scenic), Tierra Amarilla Canyon (scenic), Agua Caliente Canyon (scenic/wild), Cañada de Ojo Sarco (scenic), and Rio de las Trampas (scenic). The BLM will manage these segments for protection of wild and scenic values until the Congress determines their status. The interim boundaries will be 0.25 mile beyond the ordinary high water line. (Refer to Map 4 for segment

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

locations and the portions of each that will be afforded this status, and to Appendix 3 for more

information on the suitability studies.)

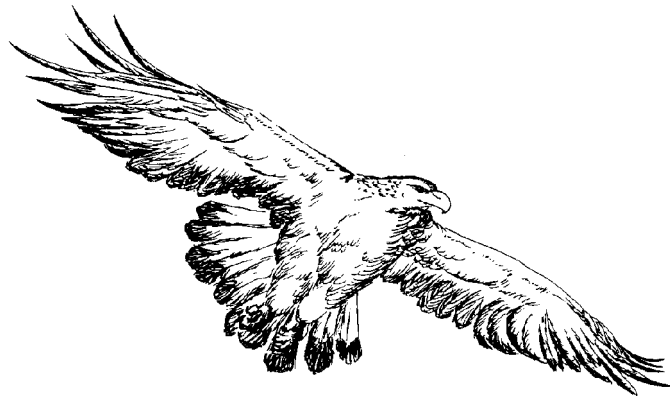
Table 3-8 River Segments Managed For Wild And Scenic Values (designated and eligible segments)			
River Segment	River Miles, Acreage	Classification	Suitability Recommendation
<u>Upper Gorge</u> Rio Grande - Colorado	22 miles 1,280 acres public 3,200 acres private	Wild (8 miles, tentative) Scenic (14 miles, tentative)	Suitable, as previously determined in the San Luis RMP.
Rio Grande/ Red River (1968)	56 miles 13,516 acres public 1,306 acres USFS 340 acres state 128 acres private	Wild (53 miles) Recreational (3 miles)	N/A
<u>Lower Gorge</u> Rio Grande - Extension (1994)	12 miles 3,990 acres public 590 acres private	Scenic	N/A
Rio Grande - Bosque	7.6 miles 1,100 acres public 1,087 acres private	Recreational (tentative)	Suitable - Recreational
Arroyo Hondo	1.2 miles 380 acres public	Scenic (tentative)	Suitability analysis deferred
<u>Copper Hill</u> Rio Embudo Box	5 miles 990 acres public 550 acres state	Wild (tentative)	Suitable - Wild
Tierra Amarilla Canyon	2.3 miles 390 acres public 210 acres state	Scenic (tentative)	Suitability analysis deferred
Agua Caliente Canyon	2.9 miles 790 acres public 40 acres private 40 acres state	Wild (1.9 miles, tentative) Scenic (1.0 miles, tentative)	Suitability analysis deferred
Cañada de Ojo Sarco	2.4 miles 450 acres public 40 acres state 90 acres private	Scenic (tentative)	Suitability analysis deferred
Rio de las Trampas	1.3 miles 210 acres public	Scenic (tentative)	Suitability analysis deferred
Designated: 64 miles; 13,516 acres public (BLM), 1,306 U.S. Forest Service; 340 State; 128 private Recommended suitable in Colorado: 22 miles; 1,280 acres public (BLM), 3,200 acres private Recommended suitable in New Mexico: 12.6 miles; 2,086 acres public; 550 state; 1,087 private, Total 3,723 Eligible in New Mexico, with deferred suitability recommendation: 10.1 miles; 2,220 acres public; 290 state; 130 private)			

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

WILDERNESS

The San Luis Hills Wilderness Study Area (WSA), located within the larger San Luis Hills ACEC, is the only parcel within the planning area under consideration for wilderness designation. The BLM will manage the San Luis Hills WSA portion of the San Luis Hills ACEC following guidance in the *Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands*

Under Wilderness Review (USDI, BLM 1995). No actions will be approved, or new uses allowed, that will damage the area's suitability for preservation as wilderness. (Note: Valid existing activities are allowed to occur in a WSA as long as no unnecessary and undue degradation of wilderness characteristics occurs.)



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES HABITAT MANAGEMENT

The BLM manages habitat on public lands including soils, watershed, and vegetation to benefit wildlife and domestic livestock. The New Mexico and Colorado state wildlife agencies manage the wildlife on public lands, including regulating hunting and relocation or reintroduction of wildlife populations. Nothing in this plan alters these responsibilities.

The BLM's objective is to protect sensitive species and provide a habitat for healthy wildlife populations and vegetative communities. The agency will continue to consult with other federal and State agencies to meet this objective. Before authorizing surface-disturbing work, BLM staff will conduct an inventory to locate any species, plant or animal, that is listed or proposed for listing. For actions that may affect such species, the BLM must engage in formal consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. Current lists of species within the planning area which are listed or proposed for listing are available from the La Jara Field Office and Taos Field Office of the BLM.

Animal damage control within the corridor has been managed under the emergency procedures outlined in BLM Manual 6830. As of March 21, 1995, the federal Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service was given full authority to manage animal damage control efforts on public lands under an annual operations plan. A Memorandum of Understanding implemented on the same date allows BLM input into the plan but does not give the agency the ability to authorize any particular action. Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service completed an environmental analysis for planned actions in 1997.

The BLM will implement the following actions and guidelines throughout the Rio Grande Corridor:

- C Do not endanger the continued existence of any sensitive species or the habitat on which it relies;
- C Monitor special-status species and maintain updated lists;
- C Manage southwestern willow flycatcher habitat in conformance with the *Southwestern Willow Flycatcher Management Plan for Taos Resource Area* (March 11, 1998). In addition, BLM will manage activities under its control in a manner consistent with recovery plans for the southwestern willow flycatcher;
- C Close duplicate and dead-end roads on fragile soils

and within crucial wildlife habitats and maintain road densities (miles of road per square mile) as shown in Table 3-8;

Table 3-9 Road Densities		
Planning Area	Existing Routes	Miles Open/Density
Upper Gorge - Colorado	91.2 miles	57.2/0.8
Upper Gorge - New Mexico ^a	31.6 miles	31.6/0.7
Lower Gorge	33.6 miles	23.5/0.7
Copper Hill	45.4 miles	14.8/0.5
Total/Average	201.8 miles	0.7 ^b
Notes: ^a Designations for this unit were completed in 1994. ^b This is a weighted average road density.		

- C Prohibit actions (i.e., access, activity) during critical periods, such as breeding or wintering, to eliminate potential adverse affects to wildlife;
- C Consider requests from the public for removal of native vegetation on a case-by-case basis, except in designated recreation areas/sites and all riparian areas. These areas will be closed to such use to protect the nesting sites of the southwestern willow flycatcher and roosting sites for the bald eagle;
- C Allow pack stock, such as llamas or horses, in the planning area except at developed campsites and on trails closed to such use (in the Wild Rivers and Orilla Verde Recreation Areas);
- C Construct cable grates on the mine entry at Black Rock Springs and at the El Poso Cave entrance to protect bats from human contact. The agency will close the caves to the general public and will only allow scientific studies;
- C Treat approximately 13,703 acres to improve biological diversity (refer to the "Vegetation, Soils and Water Quality" section above);

Upper Gorge

- C Modify 4.25 miles of net wire fence in Colorado along the state line to facilitate big game migration and movement;
- C Do not allow parking or overnight use (including camping) within 300 feet of existing trailheads or

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

trail descent points, as appropriate, to protect wildlife migration corridors and access routes to water. Install appropriate signs to inform users of the restriction. Restrictions on overnight use will not apply to the Manby, Raven, or Powerline trailheads or to the trailheads on the east rim of the gorge within the Wild Rivers Recreation Area;

- C Introduce a reproducing population of river otter into the Upper Gorge Unit in coordination with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish and Colorado Department of Wildlife;
- C Limit fuelwood and timber sales within Wild Rivers Recreation Area to those that will enhance wildlife habitat;
- C Prohibit commercially guided fishing along the Rio Grande from Chiflo Trail to Big Arsenic Trail (year-round) and on the Ute Mountain segment (from April 1 to May 31);
- C Close the West Rim Trail from the John Dunn Bridge to Chiflo from May 1 to July 31 for big game fawning and calving;

Lower Gorge

- C Restrict shoreline access in designated areas, and close selected side channels to boating use to protect bird habitat;
- C Acquire from willing sellers the water rights for springs in Arroyo Hondo Canyon, east of NM 68 near Horseshoe Curve;
- C Discourage human use on public land in the big game migratory corridor within Arroyo Hondo Canyon (near Horseshoe Curve);

Copper Hill

- C Prohibit all surface-disturbing projects, vegetative removal, and mineral material sales to protect Mexican spotted owl critical habitat area NM-BLM-3 in the Copper Hill ACEC. The habitat area will be withdrawn from public land and mining laws and closed to mineral leasing;
- C Continue the cooperative effort with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish for the reintroduction of Rio Grande cutthroat trout to Agua Caliente Canyon after the existing popula-

tion of rainbow trout is removed. Designate the Rio Grande cutthroat trout as a BLM sensitive species in New Mexico;

- C Exclude livestock grazing including the Cuestecita Allotment (#521) over the long term;
- C Withdraw the ACEC from the public land laws and mineral entry;
- C Allow new rights-of-way and mineral leasing only within the Central Protection Zone; the remainder of the ACEC will be closed;
- C Manage all woodland and forestry resources to enhance wildlife habitat and ecosystem health;
- C Acquire state and private lands within the ACEC by purchase or exchange with willing owners; and
- C Acquire administrative access to Agua Caliente for fisheries management.

In managing wildlife and their habitat, BLM is faced with identifying whether progress has been made in meeting desired objectives. As a means of tracking success or failure, and to provide a backdrop for evaluation, the BLM will implement the following monitoring methods:

Table 3-10 Wildlife Monitoring	
Type	Survey Method
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	C FWS Protocol
Cowbirds	C Level of parasitism C Identify foraging distribution C Relative abundance
Neotropical Migratory Birds	C Breeding bird surveys
Raptors	C Active nest counts C Fledgling counts
Big Game	C Population counts C Sex and age ratios